
Philippa (Pip) Thornton

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EMPLOYMENT

- **2013-present** **PhD Researcher: Royal Holloway, University of London**

I am currently a member of the first cohort of students at the new Centre for Doctoral Training in Cybersecurity, based within the Information Security Group at Royal Holloway in conjunction with the Department of Geography. My PhD thesis concerns technology companies such as Google, and how they and the search algorithms they employ impact on securities, language and knowledge production. My thesis is entitled Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction, and explores how linguistic data moves, and is moved through digital spaces by different corporate and private actors and the cultural, discursive and political power of algorithmically mediated language. I expect to submit in June 2018.

- **Sept 2016-Jan 2017** **Research Assistant: Algocracy & Transhumanism project, NUI Galway, Ireland**

In order to gain experience in the academic workplace I interrupted my PhD for 5 months to take up the role of research assistant to Dr. John Danaher. The Algocracy project examined the ethics and practicalities of algorithmic decision-making in a variety of contexts. My work included providing literature reviews, contributing to the project blog and podcast content, organising workshops and representing the NUIG Technology and Governance cluster with a presentation of my work.

- **1997-2013** **Police Officer: Metropolitan Police (MPS), New Scotland Yard**

Working variously as a Branch Detective and Police Constable within Special Branch, the Counter Terrorism Command and the Serious Crime Directorate. Specialised in financial investigation, intelligence and covert surveillance.

EDUCATION

- PhD Cybersecurity & Geopolitics, Royal Holloway, University of London (2013-present – submission June 2018)
- MA English - King's College London, Dissertation: 'Travels in Space and Time: The Invention of Monuments and the Location of Memory in Patrick Keiller's Robinson Films' (2010-2012)
- BA Honours (English Literature), Open University (1999-2005)
- BA Honours (Arts) (History & Politics), Liverpool University (1992-1995)

PUBLICATIONS

- Thornton, P. (2018) 'A critique of linguistic capitalism: provocation/intervention'. *GeoHumanities*, 12/18.
- Thornton, P. (2018). Language Redux. In Anderson C. U. & Cox G. (eds). *A Peer-Reviewed Journal About Research Values*, Vol 7, Issue 1.

- Thornton, P. (2017) 'The geographies of (con)text: language and structure in a digital age', *Computational Culture: A Journal of Software Studies*, Vol. Autumn 2017, No. Issue 6.
- Thornton, P. 'Language in the age of algorithmic reproduction' (under review).
- Thornton, P. & Danaher, J. 'On the (un)wisdom of algorithmic markets: governance by algorithmic price' (under review).
- Thornton, P. (2017) 'The Death of the Reader', *Under the Influence magazine*, Spring/Summer.
- Thornton, P. & Adey, P. (2017) 'Biometric technology', *The Critical Dictionary of International Migration* (Brasilia Press).
- Thornton, P. (2016) 'Diary of a Plastic Soldier (extracts)', *Critical Military Studies*, (2/1-2), pp.137-138.
- Thornton, P. (2015) 'The meaning of light: seeing and being on the battlefield', *Cultural Geographies*, (22/4), pp. 567-583.

EXHIBITIONS

- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, LMAO Data as Culture exhibition, 12 month commissioned installation, Open Data Institute, London (Oct 2017- Oct 2018)
- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, After Money symposium and exhibition, Edinburgh Civic Arts Centre (November 2017)
- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, Inter/Sections Media Art Technology exhibition, 6 day installation of framed poem-receipts with live printing, Mile End Arts Pavilion London (Sept 2017).

INVITED TALKS

- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', PRAXIS 10, *Text-Sound event*, London (June 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Cognitive Science Seminar Series*, Queen Mary, University of London (June 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *After Money symposium*, Design Informatics at Edinburgh University (November 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Testing Turing: unsettling legacies event*, Alan Turing Institute, London (October 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Design Informatics seminar*, University of Edinburgh (September 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *London Design Festival event – Uncertainty Playground* at London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London (September 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', *Science Museum seminar series*, The Science Museum, London (May 2017)

- ‘Critique of Linguistic Capitalism’, *Engineering Fictions seminar series*, CONNECT, Trinity College Dublin (Feb 2017)
- ‘Critique of Linguistic Capitalism and artistic intervention’, *Technology and Governance seminar series*, NUI Galway (January 2017)
- ‘Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction’, *The Prometheus Project* inaugural event on Human/Cyber interfaces, University of Warwick (October 2015)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- ‘The political economy of a large-scale hypertext search engine: Linguistic capitalism and Google’s advertising empire’, Digital Sociology symposium, Web Science Conference, Amsterdam (May 2018)
- ‘{poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism’, Poster session, Web Science Conference, Amsterdam (May 2018)
- ‘A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism’, KCL Digital Economy conference (May 2018)
- ‘Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism’, Transient Topographies, NUI Galway (April 2018)
- ‘Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism’, *Face Value workshop* and presentation at TRANSMEDIALE Festival Berlin (Jan-Feb 2018)
- ‘Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction’, *Slow Computing workshop*, Maynooth University (December 2017)
- ‘Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention’, *Communication, Art, Media: Probing Impacts and Intersections workshop* — organised by ECREA Philosophy of Communication Section in Lisbon, Portugal (October 2017)
- ‘Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism’, presented at Royal Geographic Society Annual Conference RGS-IBG in *Digital Power* session. Co-presented with John Morris (August 2017)
- ‘A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & an artistic intervention’, *Museum of Contemporary Commodities (MoCC)* session at Royal Geographic Society Annual Conference RGS-IBG (August 2017)
- ‘Cyber security beyond the sciences: critique and creative practice’, presented as part of *Of Other Cyber Securities* event at RHUL (July 2017)
- ‘The political economy of a large-scale hypertext search engine – Google, Poetry and Politics’, presented at *Political Geography Research Group conference* at RHUL (June 2017)
- ‘Critique of Linguistic Capitalism’, *Other Codes* conference - International E-Literature & Digital Humanities conference at NUI Galway (May 2017)
- ‘Critique of Linguistic Capitalism’, *Research in Real-Time – Practice as Research* conference at NUI Galway (May 2017)
- ‘A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & an artistic intervention’, Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (Boston, April 2017)

- 'Politics, Poetry & Google', Microsoft lightening talk event, Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (April 2017)
- 'Algorithms', invited to lead workshop on at *Engineering Fictions* session at CONNECT, Trinity College Dublin (Feb 2017)
- '{poem}.py: A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism' - *From Algorithmic States to Algorithmic Brains* workshop (NUI Galway, September 2016)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism' - *Living with Algorithms* workshop (London, May 2016)
- 'The Production of Context and the Digital Reconstruction of Language' - *Towards a geographical software studies* panel (Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference, San Francisco (March 2016)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction' - *Algorithmic Practices: Emergent Interoperability in the Everyday panel* (Royal Geographic Society (RGS-IBG) annual conference, Exeter University, September 2015)
- 'The Meaning of Light: Seeing and Being on the Battlefield', *Terrain panel* (Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference, Chicago, April 2015)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction' - *Thinking with Algorithms in the work of N. Katherine Hayles* workshop (Durham, February 2015)
- 'Google and the Algorithm: The Side Effects of Search' - *CDT first year project viva* (RHUL, October 2014)

TEACHING

- Designed and led Field Course element of RHUL MSc in Geopolitics & Security module on 'The Military and the City', providing original creative mapping technique to engage students on a walking tour in London, 2016.
- Invited to give guest lecture 'Soldier in the City' to Royal Holloway undergraduate Human Geography students on 2nd year Cities/Urban Geography module 2015 & 2016.
- Designed and led Field Course aspect of RHUL MSc Geopolitics and Security module in critical security mapping, providing original accompanying literature and maps (in the form of a psychogeographical study), mentoring and feedback to final presentations from participating students from Royal Holloway and University of Cergy-Pontoise, Paris 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018. The module involved walking tours of the Olympic Park, London and RHUL campus. My contribution to this innovative project earned me a RHUL College Teaching Prize for Critical Security Mapping workshop in 2014.
- Devised, planned and facilitated the inaugural Cybersecurity and Geopolitics debate and discussion session for the RHUL MSc Geopolitics and the first year Cybersecurity CDT students. The first debate, held in 2014, formed part of the MSc and CDT training modules, and was held on the topic of Edward Snowden: Naughty Step or Pedestal? The debate, which brought together several opposing disciplinary, technical and political viewpoints, has continued annually as a key element of MSc module and CDT training.

PRESS

- 'Orwell's 1984 is worth £58,318, according to Google AdWords', WIRED (UK), 25th January 2018
- 'Data as Culture: Humour and absurdity stalk the internet', NEW SCIENTIST, 2nd February 2018
- 'Pip Thornton's poem.py', RTE CULTURE FILE (radio & podcast), 6th February 2018
- 'Stichwortgeber der Datenmaschinerie' (The Key to Data Processing), Wiener Zeitung, 30th March 2017
- 'Google und der Wert der Wörter' (Google and the Value of Words), Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 26th October 2017

AWARDS

- '{poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism', Web Science poster session, Amsterdam (May 2018) WINNER (500 Euro prize)
- 'Daffodils (2016): A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', Information Security Group (ISG) Open Day poster competition (RHUL, June 2016) FIRST PRIZE
- 'Daffodils (2016): A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', Humanities and Arts Research Centre poster competition (RHUL, June 2016) FIRST PRIZE (tied)
- RHUL College Teaching Prize for Critical Security Mapping workshop (2014)

EVENTS ORGANISED

- 'Curating (in)securities: Unsettling Geographies of Cyberspace' – co-organised (with Andrew Dwyer) two paper sessions at Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (Boston, April 2017)
- 'Living with Algorithms' workshop – organised and co-convened (with Mike Duggan) workshop/round table with invited attendees (London, June 2016)
- 'BEING HUMAN//HUMAN BEING' featuring Ex Machina – curated and co-hosted (with Mike Duggan) film screening and discussion for Passengerfilms (London, March 2016)
- 'Questioning the Digital' - London Conference in Critical Thought - organised and co-convened (with Nat O'Grady) five paper sessions (UCL, June 2015)
- 'Algorithmic Justice' - wrote and presented/performed piece on as part of CDT contribution to 25th Hewlett-Packard Colloquium on Information Security HP Day 2014 (RHUL, Dec 2014)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Linguistic Geographies – personal blog detailing current research – www.linguisticgeographies.com
- Successful applicant and participant at Oxford Internet Institute (OII) Summer Doctoral Programme (SDP) (Oxford, July 2016)
- Invited attendee at 2014 Canada-UK Colloquium on The Challenges of Cyberspace (Quebec, Canada, November 2014)